



THE ST. MARK'S MESSAGE

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, New Britain

THE LION'S PAUSE with
STEPHEN HARD, SENIOR WARDEN

VOLUME XCVI
ISSUE 5

MAY 2020
ISSUE

Dear St. Mark's Parishioners and friends,

While many consider St. Mark's Church to be a group of buildings at 147 West Main Street, if the trials of the last years have taught us anything, it is that buildings serve us and our mission. When they no longer do that, we need to figure out a new way of being Church or close.

Into our situation has been injected a world-wide pandemic. Stay-at-home orders have enhanced both our sense of the Church as a community of believers without boundaries, but also the importance of place, and touch, and physical presence. Make no mistake, the future of the Church is NOT virtual. When we determined that we could no longer remain in our historical buildings, the first order of business was spending months finding a new place. As Anglican/Episcopalians we are heirs of the catholic tradition that values both the Sacred Scriptures and the Sacraments. That the spread of Christ's Word will have a post-pandemic new Spring is to be hoped because so many have become familiar with new technologies. But we also need to recognize that this cannot take the place of the sacraments and our physical gatherings. To put it in the starkest terms, there is no virtual eating. This is why our Bishops have asked that we not pretend to be celebrating the Eucharist when there is no possibility of consuming it.

This is also why our parish's food pantry remains open. We cannot fully be Christians virtually. Being a follower of Jesus means caring for others, not simply thinking about it. We must resist the seduction of a shiny new virtual world and plan to return to eating and drinking together, splashing water on babies to welcome them into the fold, embracing one another in love with hands laid on heads to ordain and oil drenched thumbs smearing the foreheads of confirmands and the sick. Most important of all, there will come a point when we need to start seeing Jesus again in others, rather than viewing them as threats to our health. Every one of us is going to be faced with the choice to venture out in love in imitation of Christ or to permanently retreat.

Special points of interest:

- *The Lion's Pause: Stephen Hard, Sr. Warden*
- *COVID-19 Update from the ECCT Bishops*
- *Parish Clerk's Corner*
- *Christ is Risen - by Barbara Campbell, CT's Diocesan Poet*
- *How is the COVID-19 Pandemic changing us? By Barbara Campbell*
- *Food Pantry is OPEN!*
- *KUDOS & Thank you*
- *A Word From Fr. Shaw Mudge*
- *Zoom Services and Meetings*
- *May Calendar*
- *KUDOS*



ECCT Clergy and Lay Leaders Communication:

COVID-19 Update #9: April 24, 2020

Dear Clergy and Wardens in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut:

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

We hope and pray that you are having a blessed Easter even as we continue to live in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The truth of the resurrection of Jesus assures us that even as death and suffering surround us, we can shout with joy: The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia, Alleluia.

While we are unsure as to whether the Governor's Executive Order for non-essential businesses and gatherings to remain closed through May 20, 2020 will be lifted or not, what is becoming clear is that when Connecticut begins to reopen it will happen in stages, bit by bit. On Monday, in the weekly briefing with the Presiding Bishop and his staff facilitated by Episcopal Relief and Development, we discussed at length what options there might be for churches with respect to phasing in re-openings when we begin to see COVID-19 deaths and infection rates decline. Some dioceses are already working on specific recommendations as their states are already reopening. Connecticut's reopening is still a ways off given the severity of the spread of the coronavirus in our state. **Still your Bishops and Canons will soon begin to put together guidelines for staged reopening of our parishes. We urge you to start thinking about the same with your vestries. Now is a good time to start the planning.**

On Tuesday, we participated in a telephone conversation with Governor Ned Lamont as part of a newly forming Governor's Faith Advisory Council. The Governor expressed appreciation for all that we and other faith communities are doing across our state to help keep up the spirits of all in our charge while also continuing to meet the needs of those who are food and housing insecure. He did ask us to **remind young people especially in our communities to heed the protocols for staying home and staying safe, including the wearing of face coverings for all people when in public spaces** as called for in his Executive Order 7BB on April 17, 2020

We also shared with the Governor our concern about the recent surge in the purchase of firearms in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. As many of you might know, we are founding members of Bishops United Against Gun Violence, a network of over 100 Episcopal bishops across the United States dedicated to ending the epidemic of gun violence in our nation. A few weeks ago, the Conveners of Bishops United (including your Bishop Diocesan) published an op-ed in Religion News Service on the increased risk to those who are vulnerable to domestic violence, and depression/suicide, especially during this time of quarantine, because of the increase of newly purchased guns into American homes in the month of March. <https://religionnews.com/2020/04/08/stopping-the-next-pandemic-gun-violence/> We are also concerned that because children are staying at home, guns in the home, whether newly purchased or existing, must be securely locked and stowed away from minors as called for in Ethan's Law signed last year. **We ask you to be pastorally aware and attentive to those in your parishes who might be at increased risk because of firearms in the home.**

It appears as if our federal government will soon pass another COVID-19 Financial Stimulus bill. Included in this \$480+ billion bill is additional money for the support of small businesses through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). We know that some of our parishes in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut have applied for, and already received PPP assistance from the original CARES Act. We encourage you to have conversation with your vestries about the appropriateness of applying for PPP for your parish employees in light of the new stimulus bill. If you do plan on applying, we urge you to act immediately as the money will quickly run out. Further, there has been some question as to whether clergy are eligible to be included in payroll costs under PPP. Attorney Zach Kohl who is



working with many parishes across ECCT on their PPP applications has given his opinion that clergy may be included in PPP. His memo can be found on the COVID-19 Financial Resources page on the ECCT website: <https://www.episcopalct.org/covid-19-coronavirus-updates/covid-19-financialresources/> **If your parish has applied for PPP, or plans to apply, or has already received funding from PPP, please let us know as we would like to have a sense of how many parishes are taking advantage of this program.**

We have mentioned in recent updates that our colleagues at CCS Consulting, who have been assisting with our Joining Jesus in a New Missional Age fundraising initiative, will be offering, free of charge, stewardship consulting to any and all parishes in ECCT seeking such assistance. **Next week CCS will offer two introductory webinars on a “Pledge Recovery and Sustainment Program” on Thursday, April 30 at 2:30 pm and Friday, May 1, at 11:00 am.** <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Pledge-Recovery---Sustainment-ProgramOffering.html?soid=1011226559275&aid=h1ZffDqKsl0> We strongly encourage you and your parishes to take advantage of this offering to help with your stewardship programs now and after the COVID-19 pandemic subsidies.

In other related financial matters we learned this week that, sin being real, some nefarious people are using the COVID-19 pandemic to promulgate new financial scams. One ECCT parish was recently contacted by a scammer with a request for cash assistance, under the name of the bishops, in order to provide relief for those suffering from COVID-19. **Please be watchful for new scams at this time, and know that neither your bishops nor any diocesan staff will be contacting you, or members of your parish, personally to seek financial assistance of any kind.**

Also under the rubric of care and safety in this time, **we need to be very vigilant in ensuring that our online communications are safe from those who would seek to do harm, especially if there are children or minors online.** Please be careful to take all precautions necessary to avoid such “zoom bombing” or other online abuse. Key resources to assist you in staying safe online can be found on the COVID-19 Communications Resources webpage on the ECCT website: <https://www.episcopalct.org/covid-19-coronavirus-updates/health-updates-andinformation/> .

With increased financial security for our parishes because of COVID-19, we imagine that parish leaders might be considering changes in parish staff now and into the future. **We would like to provide you with information to assist with your human resource questions at this time.** Please join us, Canon Robin Hammeal-Urban, our ECCT Canon for Mission Integrity and Training, and Ms. Kayla Tubolino, Human Resources Manager at the Commons, online on Tuesday, April 28 from 1:00 – 2:00 pm to discuss general human resource guidance in the wake of COVID-19. We plan to address questions about parish employment practices during and after the pandemic, with time for questions and discussion. <https://www.episcopalct.org/ECCTCalendar/2020/04/28/human-resources-zoommeeting-with-bishops-douglas-and-ahrens/>. The webinar and discussion will be recorded in the case you cannot attend the live session, and will be provided on our ECCT website.

We continue to give thanks to God for all your collegiality and support as together we help the faithful in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut participate in God’s mission in this challenging time. We value seeing many of you online on Wednesday mornings from 8:30 - 9:30 am. It is a joy being together in that digital space each week. Please do let us know how we might be of any other assistance to you. God bless you.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day this week, let us pray for the goodness of God’s creation:

O Holy God, may we love and respect all your creation, all the earth and every grain of sand in it.



May we love every leaf, every ray of your light. May we love the animals: you have given them the rudiments of thought and joy untroubled. Let us not trouble them; let us not harass them, let us not deprive them of their happiness, let us not work against your intentions. For we acknowledge that to withhold any measure of love from anything in the universe is to withhold that same measure from you.

- Fyodor Dostoevsky

Faithfully,

The Rt. Rev. Ian T. Douglas

Bishop Diocesan

The Rt. Rev. Laura J. Ahrens

Bishop Suffragan



A Message from The Reverend Dr. Shaw Mudge

Dear friends,

Many things are happening very quickly in the midst of the coronavirus process. This note may be out of date in a few hours because of those changes. In many ways, working through updates is being aware that the current news may be out of date at the time of publication. However, we do what we with the time and circumstances that we have.

Several things come to mind:

1) including paying attention to the latest changes at the state level, the federal level, the diocesan level, the Episcopal Church level.

As I understand things at this moment (at 2:50 pm on Wednesday March 18, and matters could literally change in the next 40 minutes as religious leaders meet with Governor Lamont), the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church is urging parishes not to hold in-person worship services through Easter Day.

2) The bishops of Connecticut seem to indicate that online services will be the way things are, as a diocesan norm, through May 11th.

3) Like many churches, St. Mark's plans to be holding Sunday services at 10 am, via Zoom at <https://zoom.us>. To access these services, you need to set up a Zoom account, and then, when you have that set up, you can access the current set of St. Mark's Sunday worship services at <https://zoom.us/j/178886468>

The Zoom meeting I.D. for Sunday services is 178886468.

Zoom is designed to be available on your computer, on your tablet, or your smart phone, as you may have these.

We are planning that services would be preceded by bulletins so you can follow the service from home or if traveling.

4) At the same time, Cheryl and I are coming up with alternate worship bulletins for those who can not access zoom. Even if you can not join us on zoom, you could pray through the bulletin in spiritual connection with those attending the zoom service. Simply begin the ante-communion part of the service at 10 am, wherever you are.

5) There are special diocesan-wide plans for online services during Holy Week. More at a later time, and in fact, by the time this Message is compiled, there might be an update that supercedes this note.

6) Continue to pray for the people of St. Mark's who are the parish. Pray for people who are ill, and for people who are not yet ill.

7) St. Mark's like the other parishes in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut is changing the way it does business. I would not be surprised if regular online service become the norm for parishes alongside in-person services in the future because of the length and need of the current situation. People can access online Sunday services no matter where they travel, in case of epidemics and pandemics (and there



seem to be more and more of these), or the weather, or if homebound, anywhere around the globe.

8) Your contributions to the changing face of St. Mark's are appreciated. St. Mark's continues to go forward. The worship services continue. The pastoral and administrative support network of the parish continues. The ministries of the parish make take a different shape.

Your contributions of time, talent, and treasure are greatly appreciated. Please mail your financial contributions, including pledges and offerings to: St. Mark's Episcopal Church, P. O. Box 1538, New Britain, CT 06050-1538.

9) Other ideas may emerge over the weeks ahead, charting the way forward. If you have an idea, please share it with one of the wardens, other officers, a Vestry member and/or myself to consider.

A prayer:

Heavenly Father, Loving God, we ask your Holy Spirit's guidance, wisdom, and peace on St. Mark's in the days, months, and years ahead, that all would be done in your way, your time, and to your glory. In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen.

God bless you,

Fr. Shaw



Allison's Parish Clerk News Corner

April 2020

- ◆ St. Mark's plans have turned upside down along with the rest of the world in the past 2 months. In February we were visiting other churches to consider merger possibilities. Now we are doing everything remotely! We are still doing what we do best - making connections. "Open to God's Love & Serving Our Neighbors"
- ◆ Sue Holland and Barbara Campbell have organized a group of volunteers to faithfully call *all* parishioners to "check in."
- ◆ Father Shaw has toiled for hours setting up, revising and fine-tuning St. Mark's Zoom account so we may have interactive online coffee hours and Sunday worship services. He also has a phone call method.
- ◆ Zoom meetings for vestry and committees are being held.
- ◆ ECCT has cancelled all activities for the near future but has invited clergy and lay leaders to weekly Zoom Bishops' meetings and many other offerings.
- ◆ St. Mark's Food Pantry continues to distribute food using social distancing precautions.
- ◆ Our faithful Treasurer, Barbara Campbell, is gathering payroll information with Norm Holland and will apply for the Payroll Protection Plan so St Mark's may take advantage of the program as a qualified faith-based organization if Congress makes more funds available.
- ◆ St. Mark's appreciates your pledges! Please continue to mail them to St. Mark's Episcopal Church P.O. Box 1538 New Britain, CT 06051
- ◆ Visit St. Mark's website at www.stmarksnewbritain.org for links to opening a Zoom account and to our services.



Christ is Risen
by Barbara A. Campbell
Connecticut's Diocesan Poet
April 2020

We are stressed.
Pandemic has changed our behavior.
We verbally, at a distance, without the handshake,
extend the Peace of the Lord.

The drugstore clerk thanks me
for coming in and letting her keep her job.
Neighbors walking their dogs
wave as I pass them.
Drive through tellers at the Bank
have a smile and good wishes to offer.
The Lord is Risen indeed.

I must have told my neighbor
there had been a run on tomato soup
not just toilet paper!
My door bell rang.
On my front steps
was a 50 oz. can of Campbell's
tomato with tomato pieces soup.*
I called a "Thank you" to her.
She called back, her voice full of a grin,
"I found it!"

And beauty emerges,
not just the crocuses in full bloom.
Forsythia hedges, brilliant.
Daffodils stand tall.
Magnolia trees covered with blossoms.
And out by my mailbox,
one violet,
the only flowers
my father would pick each Spring
and bring into the house
for my mother.
Christ is Risen, still truly risen.

*The 50 oz. of soup will be given to the Food Pantry





St. Mark's Food Pantry -

The Pantry is open to
ANYONE who is in need of food.

We are open Mondays from
9 to 12 and 12:30 to 2.

And on Thursdays from
9 to 12.

All we need is your name and the number of people
in your family.

Call the parish office if you have any questions.



THANK YOU!

Thursday Morning Mingle

(Not naming names—I don't want to forget anyone!)

1. Thank you to everyone who spent Thursday mornings serving breakfast to those who need it. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic our season was cut short, but to all those who showed up every week to cook, serve and clean up, who showed up to make a connection with someone, share a joke or just a smile, thank you. You brighten people's week.
2. Thank you to Ben for providing music for our Zoom services.
3. Thank you to our Lectors and Prayers of the People leaders.
4. Thank you to our Food Pantry volunteers. Those who help our clients each week and those who helped to unload the Food Share deliveries (2 deliveries in the last month). This month totaled 2,858 lbs! We couldn't stay open without you!
- 5.



ZOOM SERVICES:

Go to the St. Mark's Website:
www.stmarksnewbritain.org

Coffee Hour at 9:30 a.m.
Service begins at 10 a.m.

Sign up for Zoom (it's FREE!)
Fr. Mudge has placed very easy to use
instructions on our website on how to
sign up.

And then log in to attend our online
service. (Again, very easy to use in-
structions on the website.)

The St. Mark's Calendar - MAY 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>All dates, times and places on this calendar are subject to change due to the COVID-19 virus restrictions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Go to the St. Mark's Website to sign up for Zoom services</p>						
<p>3 9:30 a.m. Zoom "Coffee Hour" Ante-Communion 10:00 On Zoom</p>	<p>4 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry</p>	<p>5 9:30 A.M. Zoom Staff Meeting</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 9:00 - 12:00 Food Pantry</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>10 9:30 a.m. Zoom "Coffee Hour" Ante-Communion 10:00 On Zoom</p>	<p>11 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry</p>	<p>12 9:30 A.M. Zoom Staff Meeting 6:45 p.m. Zoom Vestry Meeting</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 9:00 - 12:00 Food Pantry</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>
<p>17 9:30 a.m. Zoom "Coffee Hour" Ante-Communion 10:00 On Zoom</p>	<p>18 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry</p>	<p>19 9:30 A.M. Zoom Staff Meeting</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21 9:00 - 12:00 Food Pantry</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>24 9:30 a.m. Zoom "Coffee Hour" Ante-Communion 10:00 On Zoom</p>	<p>25 9:00 - 2:00 Food Pantry</p>	<p>26 9:30 A.M. Zoom Staff Meeting</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 9:00 - 12:00 Food Pantry</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>
<p>31 9:30 a.m. Zoom "Coffee Hour" Ante-Communion 10:00 On Zoom</p>						

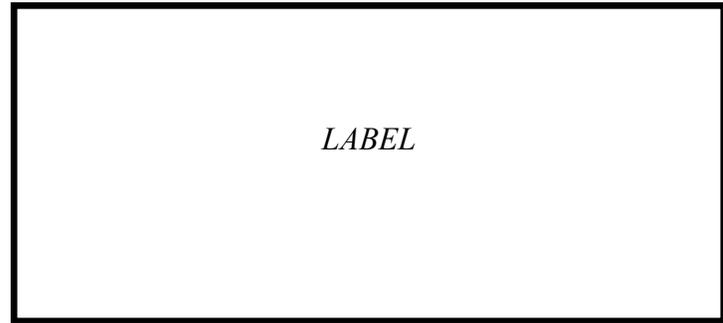
**St. Mark's Episcopal
Church, New Britain**

**PO Box 1538
90 Main Street
New Britain, CT 06051
The Rev. Dr. Shaw Mudge,
Priest In Charge**

**Phone: 860-225-7634
Email: parishoffice@stmarksnewbritain.org
Website: www.stmarksnewbritain.org**

**PRAYER CHAIN: to activate the chain call
Barbara Campbell 860-673-7607,
Campbellba24@gmail.com**

**If you or someone you know is hospitalized,
please inform the clergy or call the parish
office.**



***Open to God's Love -
Serving Our Neighbor***

Due date for all articles for the
June Issue of the St. Mark's Message is May 20.

Parish Office Hours During the COVID 19 Crisis.

Cheryl is in the Parish Office on Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and she works from home on Friday (mainly checking email and returning calls.) If you call the office on a Friday, please leave a message and Cheryl will get back to you.

Once we get back to "normal", the Parish Office hours will return to Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30p.m.



Weekly Parish Services:
During the COVID-19 crisis, services will be held on Zoom (See page 6 for instructions to join the service.)

Pledges and Offerings
Please remember to keep sending in your pledges and offerings to the parish. Mail in our P.O. Box is picked up several times a week. Your pledge payments are compiled at least once a month and deposited.

The parish ministries to the community and worship services adapt and continue, even in these most challenging times.

Mailing address: St. Mark's Episcopal Church PO Box 1538 New Britain, CT 06050 -1538 or to electronically send checks to the Church via your bank.

St. Marks keeps going in God's way, God's time, and to God's glory.

KUDOS

Thank you to the Lincoln St. neighborhood near Mark Giulietti and Stephen Hard for their food drive for the St. Mark's Food Pantry. We have received both food and money from this drive.

Our pantry has been open and is very busy during these trying times. Thank you to Migdalia and Mark for all their work with the Pantry during this time.

Thank you also to Mrs. Barbara Howey for her generous donation to the Food Pantry.

Jerome Home Services:
The third Friday of each month at 10:30 a.m.
Upcoming dates: **Currently suspended.**